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BALDOCK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1962



Baldock U.D.C.,
Council Offices,
High Street,
Baldock,
(Telephone: Baldock 3221)

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (also Divisional M.O. Herts C.C.).

VICTOR R. WALKER, MB., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.,
Divisional Health Office, .
Bedford Road,
Hitchin.
(Telephone: Hitchin 50411/4).

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

BRIAN G. WILLIS, M.A.P.H.I., (Appointed 1st May, 1962).

RODENT OPERATOR

J. REDHOUSE.

To the Chairman and Members of the Baldock Urban District Council

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

By direction of Ministry Circular 1/63 I submit a report on the health of your district for 1962.

For this year the local birth rate of 17.3 swings below that of England and Wales (18.0). By reason of a younger than average local population the death rate for the year (9.3) is again well below the national rate (11.0); application of the local comparability factor supplied by the Registrar General produces a standardised death rate of 12.5.

Although the infant death rate for the year is favourable the local stillbirth rate is seen to be unduly high, but the actual numbers involved are small.

There was no serious local incidence of infectious disease during the year.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

V.R. Walker

District Medical Officer of Health.

May, 1963.

SECTION A

LOCAL STATISTICS

Area of District	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	542 acres
Population	}	Census 1961	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,764
		Registrar General's Estimate for mid-1962	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,780
		Persons per acre - Census, 1961	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12.5
Number of separately rated hereditaments at 31st March, 1963									...	...		2,523
Number of separate dwellings (included in above figure) at 31st March, 1963.			...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,940
Rateable Value at 1st April, 1963			...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£320,423
Estimated sum represented by a Penny Rate			...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£1,300

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR
THE YEAR 1962

BALDOCK
URBAN
DISTRICT

Comparable Rate
for England and
Wales

LIVE BIRTHS

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Legitimate	112	68	44
Illegitimate	5	3	2
	<hr/> 117	<hr/> 71	<hr/> 46

Rate per 1,000 population	... ..	17.3	18.0
Illegitimate Live Births per cent of total live births	... .. 4.5%		

STILL BIRTHS

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Legitimate	7	4	3
Illegitimate	-	-	-
	<hr/> 7	<hr/> 4	<hr/> 3

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	56.5	18.1
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TOTAL LIVE & STILL BIRTHS

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
	124	75	49

DEATHS

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
	63	24	39

Rate per 1,000 population	9.3	11.9
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INFANT DEATHS

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Under 1 week	1	1	-
At 1 - 4 weeks	1	-	1
At 4 - 52 weeks	-	-	-
	<hr/> 2	<hr/> 1	<hr/> 1

Infant Mortality Rates

Total infant deaths per 1,000			
total live births	... ..	17.1	20.7
Legitimate infant deaths per			
1,000 legitimate live births...	... ..	17.9	
Illegitimate infant deaths per			
1,000 illegitimate live births	... ..	0.0	
<u>Neo-natal Mortality Rate</u> (deaths under			
4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	... ..	17.1	15.1
<u>Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate</u>			
(deaths under 1 week per 1,000			
total live births)	... ..	8.5	
<u>Perinatal Mortality Rate</u> (stillbirths			
and deaths under 1 week combined			
per 1,000 total live and still births)	... ..	64.5	
<u>Maternal Mortality</u> (including abortion)			
Number of deaths	... ..	None	
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	... ..	0.0	0.35

Comment on Population Changes. The estimated local population shows, this year a little change. Live births (117) were 12 less than for 1961 while deaths (63) were 9 above the figure for 1961.

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

No important change occurred during the year.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

- (1). Water Supply. This is provided by the Lee Valley Water Company and has been of excellent quality and quantity. Regular sampling has been carried out by the Company from their installations supplying Baldock and 35 bacteriological and 7 chemical samples taken during the year were all reported as conforming to the standards of purity suitable for public supply.
Direct piped supply is provided to all premises in the district, and there is no evidence of plumbo-solvency.
- (2). Sewerage and Sewage Disposal. The district is covered by a system of sewers and all but four premises are connected to this network. Of these four, two are connected to septic tanks and two to cesspools.
Baldock no longer has its own disposal works, and uses the facilities operated by Letchworth Urban District Council, whence the towns sewage is conveyed by means of a pumping station.
No extension to this system has been made during the year.
- (3). Public Cleansing. The weekly collection of refuse has been maintained during the majority of the year, and there have been no instances of refuse being dumped to cause a nuisance.
Great concern is being felt at the rapid filling of the tip, which has a very limited life left. It is hoped that an alternative tip may be found in the near future, or some other method of disposal employed. Attempts to run a co-operative scheme with neighbouring authorities have not met with success.
- (4). Swimming Pool. The swimming pool, which is privately owned, but used by factory employees and school children has again proved of great benefit, and regular sampling has shown that the treatment employed has been both effective and satisfactory.
- (5). Paddling Pool. Regular treatment of the water in the Council-owned Paddling Pool at Avenue Park has been carried out, and, due to the alteration in the method of treatment, a considerable saving in water has been possible. Mechanical pollution is very high in an installation of this nature, and, as the water is static, some algae growth is to be expected. Chlorination and algae preventative have, however, allowed changes of the 15,000 gallon capacity to be reduced.
- (6). Rodent Control. Routine work has been continued and minor infestations treated with complete success. No resistance to warfarin has been experienced, and sewer treatments have been found to produce negative results which has continued the happy situation of previous years. A major infestation early in the year was satisfactorily dealt with, occurring at the Councils Refuse Tip.
- (7). Sanitary Inspections of the Area (other than Dwellinghouses and Food Premises)

(a) Number of inspections carried out under the Factories Act	14
(b) Number of inspections carried out under the Petroleum Acts	6
(c) Number of inspections carried out in connection with drainage and sewerage	17
(d) Number of inspections carried out in connection with water supply and sampling	5
(e) Miscellaneous inspections	27
(f) Number of nuisances investigated and dealt with	11
(g) Number of investigations regarding infectious diseases	6

- (8). Factories and Workplaces. Routine inspections were made of 22 of the 36 factories and only minor contraventions were found and dealt with informally.
- (9). Air Pollution. Observations on all boiler house chimneys have been carried out and no smoke nuisances were found. Of the three plants, two are oil fired and one coke fired. Air Pollution in Baldock is mainly due to domestic fires not using smokeless fuels and from the considerable traffic on the main roads passing through the town. It is hoped that, with the coming of the proposed by-pass, the percentage of traffic pollution will be reduced, although, being to the west of the town, and thus to the windward in the prevailing direction of the wind, it remains to be seen what effect, if any, is experienced. It is estimated that 80% of all air pollution is derived from the domestic grate, and, there being no bye-laws in Baldock to control installations in new houses, there can be no improvement to the present conditions until smoke control areas are introduced, or until the householder uses modern smokeless fuels to a much greater extent.

SECTION D

HOUSING

On the 31st December, 1962, the number of applications on the Council's waiting list for accommodation was 174, which is an increase of 14 when compared with the previous year's total of 160.

During 1962, 39 applications were registered, 11 applicants re-housed and 14 applications cancelled.

Protracted negotiations with the Herts. County Council were continued during the year, without result, for the purchase of land to the east of the town, which is urgently required for housing purposes. Until this land, or other areas outside the boundaries, can be used for building Council housing, the increase in local authority houses cannot be carried out, and those applicants on the lower part of the waiting list will have a considerable time before their case can be dealt with.

A scheme for the redevelopment of The Tene estate was introduced during the year, the present aluminium bungalows being replaced by permanent housing which will nearly double the number of units on the land.

The Council purchased ten sub-standard houses in Icknield Way, four of which are now empty, and it is proposed to redevelop this land when all occupancies are terminated on the availability of Council accommodation.

The number of private dwellings provided by new construction during the year was 2.

Five applications were received and approved for Standard Improvement Grants.

Caravans

The total number of caravans in the district on approved sites at the end of 1962 was 48. Some difficulty was experienced with unauthorised siting of caravans on the Old Icknield Highway, which was dealt with by the police. An attempt to close this highway to vehicular traffic was made through the Magistrates Court, but, due to opposition, this was not allowed, so that the road remains accessible to the migrant caravan dwellers.

Inspection of Dwellinghouses during the year

(1) Number of dwellinghouses inspected under the Housing and Public Health Acts.	27
(2) Number of dwellinghouses found to be unfit for human habitation.	2
(3) Number of dwellinghouses in which defects were remedied by owners.	2
(4) Number of dwellinghouses the subject of Closing or Demolition Orders.	Nil
(5) Number of filthy or verminous houses.	Nil

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

- (1) There were no special Clean Food Campaigns but food shops and food preparing premises were regularly inspected and the opportunity taken to give advice on the clean handling of food to the personnel concerned.

The Food Hygiene Regulations were brought to the notice of all occupants and in a number of cases informal action taken to bring the premises up to a satisfactory standard.

(2) The type of food premises are as follows:-

Butchers 5; cafes, restaurants, snack bars, 8; confectioners. 6; dairies, 1; fish shops, 3; greengrocers and fruiterers, 4; grocers and provision merchants, 8; bakehouses, 2; canteens, 2; public houses, 18.

(3) Premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, sale and storage of ice-cream 24 (no ice cream is manufactured in the district); manufacture of meat products, 1.

(4) There is no slaughterhouses in the district.

(5) No food poisoning instances were reported in the year.

(6) There is only one dairy and this is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

UN SOUND FOOD

During the year, the following amounts of unsound food were surrendered for condemnation:-

Tinned Fish	25 Tins
Tinned Fruit	154 Tins
Tinned Vegetables	27 Tins
Tinned Meats	34 Tins
Tinned Milk, Cream and Milk Products	2 Tins
Tinned Preserves	3 Tins
Fresh Fruit	4 Cases

SECTION F

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Vaccination against Smallpox. During the early Spring months the Bradford outbreak had considerable impact in North Herts, with follow-up of remote contacts, a general increased acceptance of primary vaccination, and the special protection of health service personnel likely to make the first contact with any introduction of that disease into the area. Public concern and alarm also lead to a great volume of work connected with certificates for persons proceeding abroad.

Immunisation. The standard use of a TRIPLE antigen - against diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus - continues available for infants from both welfare centres and practitioners, with a general high rate of acceptance and remarkable freedom from complaints of reaction. A "booster" dose against diphtheria and tetanus - omitting the whooping cough fraction - continues on offer at the time of infant school entry and is widely accepted.

Against anterior poliomyelitis, in the early summer the Ministry of Health offer of one dose of Oral (SABIN) vaccine was made available to all children of primary school age previously vaccinated with SALK vaccine, issued in schools on a lump of sugar. Since then the ORAL vaccine, in 3 doses at 4 - 6 weeks interval, has been almost generally adopted for infant immunisation in North Herts, to give a probably more lasting and permanent type of immunity than the previous injections of SALK vaccine. Essentially an attenuated living vaccine given by mouth has replaced a killed virus given by injection.

Totals of notified infectious diseases for the whole year 1962 (after correction) were:-

Measles 137, Scarlet Fever 5, Acute pneumonia 2, Erysipelas 1 and Infective Hepatitis 2.

The main prevalence of measles and scarlet fever fell in the last months of the year; the two cases of infective hepatitis fell in the third quarter.

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Deaths during the year, 1962.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 - 1								
2 - 5								
5 - 15								
15 - 25	1	1						
25 - 35								
35 - 45	1							
45 - 55	1							
55 - 65		1						
65 & Over								
Not Known								
TOTALS	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—

Comment: New notifications of respiratory tuberculosis comprised three adult males and two adult females, giving a total identical with 1961. Inward transfers to the local register numbered one single (respiratory) case. No single death from tuberculosis was credited to the district for the year.

V.R. WALKER

District Medical Officer of
Health

May, 1963.

(7)

APPENDIX

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for
the Urban District of Baldock for the year 1962

PART 1 of the Act

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes of provisions as to health.

	Number of Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are en- forced by Local Authority.....	--	--	--	--
(2) Factories not included in (1) which S.7 is enforced by Local Authority.....	36	22	--	--
(3) Other premises in which S.7 is enforced by the Local Authority	--	--	--	--
Total.....	36	22	--	--

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found

	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecu- tions were instituted.
	Found	Remed- ied	to H.M. Inspec- tor	By H.M. Inspec- tor	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)					
Overcrowding (S.2)					
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)					
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)					
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)					
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient					
(b) Unsuitable or defective.....	1			1	
(c) Not separate for sexes.....					
Other offences against the Act.....	2	1	1	2	
Total....	3	1	1	3	Nil

PART VIII OF THE ACT

Outwork

(Sections 133 and 134)

Nature of Work (1)	No. of out-workers in August list required by Section 133 (1) (c) (2)	Section 133		Section 134		
		No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council (3)	No. of prosecu- tions for failure to supply lists (4)	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises (5)	Notices served (6)	Prosec- utions (7)
Wearing apparel Making etc.,	2	-	-	-	-	-

V.R. WALKER

District Medical Officer of Health

May, 1963.

